

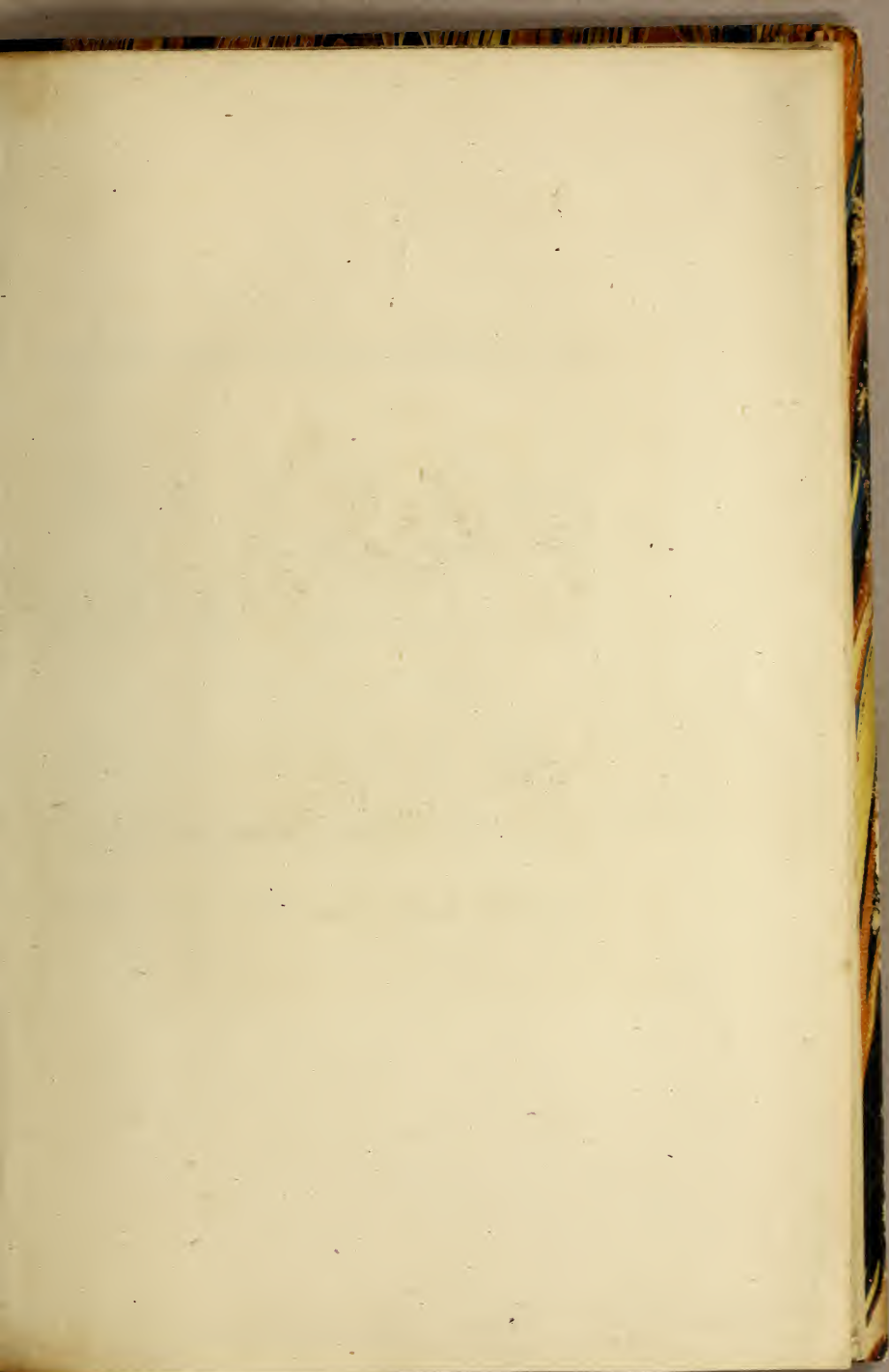


Exhib. 20039



John Carter Brown.





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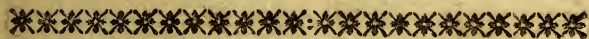
TRA



*Del. No. 2.*



A  
L E T T E R  
TO THE  
NORTH AMERICAN,  
On OCCASION of his  
A D D R E S S, &c.



(Price One Shilling and Three Pence.)

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C

JOHN CARTER BROWN

THE  
LIBRARY OF  
THE  
MUSEUM OF  
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OF THE  
CITY OF  
BOSTON  
FEB 10 1891

A  
L E T T E R  
TO THE  
NORTH AMERICAN,

On OCCASION of his

A D D R E S S  
TO THE  
COMMITTEE of CORRESPONDENCE  
IN  
B A R B A D O S.

---

By a NATIVE of the ISLAND.

---

————— *All your Attempts*  
*Shall fall on me, like brittle Shafts on Armour*  
*That break themselves; or like Waves against a Rock,*  
*That leave no Sign of their o'erboiling Fury*  
*But Foam and Splinters: My Innocence, like these,*  
*Shall stand triumphant. ———*

MASSINGER.

---

B A R B A D O S:

Printed by GEORGE ESMAND and COMP.

M.DCC.LXVI.



*E R R A T A.*

**P**AGE 10, Line 13, for *and* read *of*. Page 11,  
Line 10, read, *such a* Contest. Page 38, Line  
6, leave out the second *of*.



A

## L E T T E R

T O T H E

NORTH AMERICAN, &amp;c.

S I R,

YOUR Address to the Committee of  
 Correspondence has been received in  
 this Island, and the Gentlemen, lured by  
 the fair Promises in your first Page, of  
 civil Treatment from your Pen, have  
 given it an attentive Reading: But how little has  
 the Effect been answerable either to their just  
 Hopes, or to your own pretended Expectations!  
 For instead of rousing in their Minds the least Re-  
 morse for the imputed Guilt, they only find their  
 Bosoms (not insensible, indeed, to Honour, and its  
 Attendant, Delicacy) wounded by the Point of an  
 unmerited Reproach. From the Committee them-  
 selves, however, you can expect no Answer; for  
 those Gentlemen, having obtained the Sanction of  
 their constituent Body to the Letter, the *true* Let-  
 ter,

A

ter,

ter, which was transmitted by them to the Agent, on the unhappy Subject in Dispute, are not answerable for the Contents of it to any Individuals, even of this Country, much less so, then, to the Individuals of any other; and least of all to one, who, without a Name himself, has presumptuously taken upon him to reproach them in the Names of three Millions of their Fellow Subjects. But as a Friend to the Gentlemen of that Committee, or rather as a grateful Member of the Community, which I consider to have been faithfully served by them in the very Instance from which you have taken Occasion to arraign their Sentiments, and revile their Want of Spirit, I cannot forbear to offer something, under a full Conviction of their Innocence, which I flatter myself will be accepted, as the fullest Proof of it.

THE Accusation, for such it appears to be, which you have drawn up against the Gentlemen, is couched under two Articles, as you have yourself distinguished them; the first, a gross and wanton Insult of your Countrymen, and the next an Avowal of Opinions injurious to Liberty. But in what Manner have you supported these two Heads of your Complaint? Why, the first of them rests upon the Strength only of a false Evidence; and to make good the next, you have been obliged to torture the Expressions of the Committee's Letter into a Meaning and Confession foreign to its Design; and then, like a true State Inquisitor, you proceed to treat the Gentlemen as Criminals, though nothing but your own cruel Rack had made them so.

You complain, in the first Instance, that they have charged your Countrymen with *Rebellion* in a Letter, which was approved of by the two Branch-



es of the Legislature, and published to the World in News Papers. But I am here warranted by Authority to say, that the Letter you intend, and which was sent to the Agent by the Committee of Correspondence, as well as laid before our House of Representatives, and by them published in the Minutes of their Proceedings, contained no such Charge; nor was the opprobrious Epithet *Rebellious*, to be seen in it, as both the Agent can testify, and the Journals of the House will make appear: So that if any Letter of the Committee's has appeared in the News Papers on the Continent with that frightful Word *Rebellious*, as fastened to the Opposition of your Countrymen, it must have been conjured up there, by some disturbed Imagination amongst themselves; little suspecting, however (I suppose) that it would have drawn their Champion into the Field, and set him to fighting with a Shadow.

HERE, then, I might have rested the Defence of the Committee, on this first Point, but I disdain to take the Advantage; *non tali Auxilio Tempus eget*: On the Contrary, I am ready to indulge the Pleasure which you seem to take, in brandishing your Pen at the Committee for this supposed Offence, by supposing, with you, that they had committed it, and had really made Use of the Word so wrathfully objected to them: Yet, in the *Place*, and in the *Manner* in which the Epithet is made Use of, it cannot, I think, be understood in the severe Sense you take it, as a Design of *bringing a Charge* against your Countrymen; for if it had been so designed, is it probable that in the very same Page where you found *this Attack made upon your Countrymen*, you would have seen (as you yourself take Notice) the

*Foundation laid for their Defence?* No! Sir, it cannot really be taken as a Charge brought by *the Committee*, to brand the North Americans with Infamy; but, such a Charge having been brought against them by *others*, by the People in Power, and their Partisans, it was only recited by the Committee in their Letter, to serve a Purpose, and that too an innocent one, of their own: It seems, indeed, introduced there only to stand as *Premises*, from whence a supposed *Conclusion* was to be drawn, which, in the Way of Analogy, might the more clearly shew the particular Hardship laid upon this Island by the Stamp Duties. To make myself understood the better, I will draw out the Passage as it appears to me the Gentlemen designed *they* should be understood by it. “ This is just as reasonable [viz. the laying the Stamp Duties on Barbados, in order to defray the Expences of maintaining Troops on the Continent of America] and just as merciful too, as it would be to impose an heavy Mulct on the Inhabitants of this Place, by Way of Punishment for (*what the People in Power, and their Partisans, have called*) the present rebellious Opposition given to Authority by our Fellow-Subjects on the Northern Continent.” Now that this was the true and only Sense in which the Gentlemen of the Committee meant to have that Passage taken, had they really used the unlucky Word in Question, seems to be most clear from hence, that, if the Gentlemen had meant to charge the North Americans for the Violence of their Opposition on their own Judgment in the harsh Terms supposed, they would rather have taken Pains to support that Charge, by Arguments against the Conduct of your Countrymen, than have gone on, as they did, to offer  
Arguments



Arguments against the very Thing which had provoked it : Arguments, too, penned with that Force, as to be now actually turned upon them in your Address, for not having given Rise to the same Degree of Opposition in themselves. Thus I think the *Intention* (at least) of the Committee stands acquitted, even under a Supposition of the Fact complained of, although their *Indelicacy* in the Expression might, in that Case, have stood in Need of an Apology. But if a Sense of even this had by any Means struck the Gentlemen of the Committee, before they closed and sent away their Letter, so as to induce them to blot out the offensive Word, in Tenderness to their Fellow Subjects on the Continent, no Complaint ought then to have been heard from thence, at least in public, about the Matter. And if the Offence was ever really given, it is now as certain that the Reparation must have followed close upon the Heels of it, indeed so close, as not only to save the Knowledge of such Offence from even the very Agent to whom the Letter was addressed, but all Appearance of it from the Eye of the General Assembly before whom the true Letter of the Committee was, at their first Meeting after, laid for their Inspection. I leave it then to the Judgment of every impartial Mind, who it is that has the most Occasion for Complaint on the Publication of that false and surreptitious Copy of the Committee's Letter in North-America, the People of that Country, or the Gentlemen of the Committee ? The Latter of whom have had the Mortification to see the Subjects of their Correspondence basely exposed, without Authority, to the World, whilst the Former, if they have been really hurt by the Effect of such a Licence, owe it only to the officious Zeal of some  
of



of their own Brethren residing at the Time amongst us; who, like Vipers in the Bosom of our Country, whilst they were drawing Nourishment from its Warmth, could in the same Moment aim a Sting ungratefully to wound its Peace.

BUT from the avowed Design of your Address, and under the second Head of your Complaint, prosecuted with such uncommon Bitterness, it is too plain that it was not altogether the *ill Word* that the Committee had made Use of against your Countrymen which provoked your Rage, but the *ill Thing* which the People of this Island had done, and which the Committee had drawn an Argument in their Favour from their doing: I mean the Obedience yielded by them to the lawful Authority of our Mother Country, in a Case where they might have been tempted by a very notable Example to Resistance. Yet how far the People of this Island were justified on the *Principles of Duty* in their Submission, and how properly the Committee seconded the Views of their Constituents in Compliance with the Trust reposed in them on the same just Principles, I leave to the Determination of every candid and impartial Person, on the Event of Things. The Committee professed a due Submission to the supreme Orders of the State, whilst they confided in the Goodness of their Sovereign, and in the Wisdom and Justice of the Parliament, to relieve them from the Burthen they complained of: And what has been the Event? Why, the Parliament have wisely, and justly too, determined on a Repeal of the oppressive Act; and his Majesty has graciously given it in express Command to the Secretary of State, 'to signify his highest Approbation of the dutiful, loyal, and discreet Conduct observed in this Govern-

' ment,

‘ment, during the late unjustifiable Transactions  
 ‘in other Parts of America.” Again, the Com-  
 mittee declared their Opinion of the exclusive Right  
 of the Colonies to lay internal Taxes upon them-  
 selves; yet, for good and obvious Reasons, arising  
 from their Intelligence of the Dispositions of the  
 People in general in the Kingdom, they expressed  
 their Diffidence of the Justness of that Opinion.  
 And what is the End of this Matter also? Why,  
 the Parliament (without so much as a Division in  
 the most popular Branch of it, the House of Com-  
 mons) have pronounced all the Votes and Resolu-  
 tions of the American Assemblies, formed on that  
 Opinion of their exclusive Right, &c. as derogato-  
 ry to the Legislative Authority of Parliament, and  
 inconsistent with the Dependency of the Colonies  
 upon the Crown of Great Britain; and then, by the  
 same formal Act, have declared the Power and Au-  
 thority of Parliament, to make Laws and Statutes  
 of sufficient Force and Validity to bind the Colonies  
 and People of America in *all* Cases whatsoever.

BUT now, that the Conduct of our People in their  
 Submission, though threatened by your Country-  
 men to be starved for it, and the Sentiments of the  
 Committee in Support of that Conduct, for which  
 they have been branded by yourself as slavish and  
 detestable, may stand the fairest Examination, I will  
 readily return with you to that uncertain Ground  
 we stood upon whilst the Stamp Act remained in  
 Force, and whilst the Resolutions of our Superiors  
 were both unknown and unforeseen: And there,  
 upon your own beloved Principles of a *natural*  
*Right*, to which is surely to be annexed a Regard  
 to *natural Interest*, since it is only for the Sake of  
*this*, we can be led to a Discussion or a Thought  
 of



of *that*; and then allowing me, which is no more than just, to suppose the People of this Island as right in following the Things which make for our own Ease and Interest, as the People of the Continent are in what will make for their good Pleasure and Advantage, I do then insist upon it, that the Submission of our Country, and the Sentiments of the Committee, were founded on the wisest Policy, without being in the least open to any Kind of Censure for an unmanly Fear. For now I will desire, though without meaning to betray or give up our political Creed (grounded, as it is, on the essential Requisites of every Constitution ~~and~~ Government) but only that all Mention of it may be suspended for a While; nay, further, that it may be supposed *our* political Creed, on the Point of Resistance to the Supreme Power of the State, in Case of any imagined Oppression of our several Colonies, is the same as yours: And then, on such a Supposition, I will beg of you (if you can command yourself to do so) calmly to consider upon a comparative View of our different Settlements in the North and South (the one an immense Continent, with mighty Numbers, and the other a small Island, containing only a Handful of Men) if, instead of the *Submission* which our People gave into, *their Spirit had flamed as high* as did the North Americans, there was a single Circumstance in our Situation, that gave us an Opportunity of exerting it to Advantage? Nay, whether such a Flame could have been lighted up in so confined a Spot as this, to any other Effect than to have burnt our own Fingers at the End of it? To resist an Evil, with the Prospect, however small, of overcoming it, I own is rational and manly; but to resist *one* Evil, with not only the Hazard



zard, but the Certainty, of bringing down *more* and *greater* Evils on our Heads, is both absurd and frantick. And what must have been the End of our Resistance to the Stamp Act, in Case the Force of our Mother Country had been brought against us, to compel the Execution of it, and subdue the Opponents, I shall leave it even to yourself to think of. Surely the *Scenes* that must have *obtruded themselves on the Imagination* of every Inhabitant of this Island in such Contest, could be full of nothing but Destruction and Despair; and if *your* Soul sickened only with the Idea of a *doubtful Conflict*, what must *our* Souls have done under the Horror of an *unavoidable Subjection*? North America, boundless in its Extent of Territory, and formidable in its Numbers, might have found the Resources of Empire within itself, and for that Reason have been *fearless* of the Consequences of Resistance; but this Island, which could not so much as exist without the constant Protection and Support of some superior State, must ever be dependant, and could only (in these Days at least) have *suffered* by a Revolt. North America, then, in struggling for the Liberties she demanded, might possibly have arrived at a State of Independance, but could not, in the Nature of Things, have been reduced to that of Slavery: But this Colony, whose best Hope could only rest on our changing one State of Dependance for another, in violently struggling for a greater Share of Liberty than we possessed, might have found ourselves but the more closely riveted in our Chains: And, open as we are to every Kind of Distress, by the intercepting of our Supplies, that could befall our Persons; and exposed to every Sort of Depredation, by the same Naval Force, that could

be committed on our Properties, what other Fate was likely to betide us in the last Scene of all, but that of Beggary added to Slavery?

SUCH were the Considerations that must have naturally presented themselves to our View, had we allowed ourselves to entertain the Thought of a Resistance, by all Appearances from *without*; and now I will turn to other Considerations, which, though of a less Weight, yet could not but have their Influence, arising out of Circumstances of Distress and Hazard from *within*. The Inhabitants of this Country engaged in the Production of a very rich Commodity, which is not however to be produced but by the Labour of great Numbers of Slaves, nor can these be purchased but at an exorbitant Price, there naturally from hence arises amongst us, a continual Transfer of such a valuable Property, as requires to be perfectly secured in the Conveyance; and on the other Side, such a Security for the Sums advanced upon the Occasion of these Transfers, as would, in case a general Opposition had taken Place to the Stamp Act amongst us, have exposed the Merchants and Planters, by Turns, to the severest Losses, by an Infraction of that cursedly-contrived Law.

FOR would the Merchant, in the first Instance, who had taken up a Cargo of Slaves from Africa, to the Value of 10,000 l. Sterling, venture to sell out these Slaves in Lots of ten, twenty, or thirty each, to the several Planters in the Country, and then take their Bonds for the Purchase-Money (payable, according to Custom, in two Months) without having that *Stamp* of Office on the Paper, by the Want of which, according to the express Letter of the Law, the Bonds were to be annulled? And,  
in



in the next, could the Planter, who had an Opportunity of purchasing a Gang of seasoned Negroes, the Prices of which, although become (as I have said) exorbitant, yet such are seldom to be met with but from Persons reduced to the most pressing Circumstances, and consequently open to every Temptation that may lead them to do Injury to a Purchaser; could he, I say, venture to purchase, and pay the Money for a Gang of such Negroes, without having his Bill of Sale properly *stamped* according to Law, as well as properly drawn and executed? But if he was hardy enough to do this upon the Strength of his own Fortune, or rather his own Fund, could he, if he had not this Fund himself, with any Honour risque a Purchase of that Kind upon the Stock of any Correspondent of his in London, with whom he had a generous Credit for as many Thousands as he ought in Prudence to lay out in that Sort of Property?

BEHOLD, then, the Door shut at once against all Opposition amongst us to this detested Act, detested, as it was, or behold us led into an Opposition to it, with the Hazard of the Loss of all our Fortune, and our Faith!--and this too, without the common Chances in our Favour of the Recompence we sought for, in the Preservation of our Freedom.

BUT that nothing might be omitted which can do the proper Justice to our Cause, I must now turn to an Argument in Favour of our Submission in that painful Instance, drawn from the *grateful Temper* of our Community, as these which I have just produced, are founded on their *good Sense*, and *just Discernment*; and this arises from the very Circumstance which *you* have brought to justify the ill Humour in which the Stamp Act found *your* Countrymen,



but which must in the same Moment have produced the very contrary Effect in the Disposition of all *mine*, and upon the same just Grounds. "Every Man (you say in your Address) must remember how immediately after the Tempest of the late War was laid, another Storm began to gather over North America.-- Every Wind that blew across the Atlantic Ocean, brought with it additional Darkness; every Act of the Administration seemed calculated to produce Distress, and to excite Terror." Now I must observe that some of those Winds, particularly one of them, which I believe carried with it the worst Darkness to the North American Coast, spread, like the Pillar of the Cloud which appeared by Night betwixt the different Camps of Ægypt and the Children of Israel, the most desirable Light upon the Faces of our People on these Southern Shores: For it was the Wind that blew over to us that very Act, which, forming a new System of American Police, put a Stop to that contraband Trade betwixt the Continent of North America and the French Sugar Islands, which had been so long carried on to the advancing the Prosperity of a Parcel of *foreign* Settlements to the Destruction of *our own*. So that the Distress and Terror which that ill Wind produced amongst the Inhabitants of the North, brought with it, like a propitious Gale, all Joy and Gladness to the British Settlers in the South. How could it be supposed then, that, after an Act which shewed so earnest an Attention in the Administration of that Day to the Prosperity of the Sugar-Islands, the Inhabitants of these should shew themselves so ungratefully disposed towards any subsequent Act, passed under the same Direction of Affairs,

fairs, as to resist it without a Trial; and not only so, but to appear rather to absolve themselves from the Government, than suffer the Execution of it amongst them; and that too on a Principle new, and undetermined in Favour of the Colonies, and which, in Case of a Resolution in the Parliament to enforce the Act, they must have vainly waded through the Blood and Miseries of a civil War, to make good against their King and Mother Country!

AND yet it is well known, that, notwithstanding all those interesting Considerations which affected us in this Place as Men, and those just Principles of Loyalty and Affection, which determined us at last as Members of Society, as well as Subjects of one of the most desirable Governments in the World, to submit to its Authority, and receive its Law with Deference; yet even these, with all their Influence, could not win us over to receive it with Cordiality, or to submit to it without complaining. For the Representatives of our People took the first Occasion which was offered them, of expressing theirs, and their Constituents Sentiments on the Subject, to present their warm Remonstrances to our Governor, against the oppressive Act. \*

Yet

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\* This was in the Address to his Excellency, in Answer to his Speech on the Meeting of the new Assembly; in which Speech, however, not a Word was said of the Stamp Act; but the Resolution of the House, to publish their just Sentiments of it to the Government on the very first Opportunity, easily overcame that Difficulty. Accordingly, after having expressed their Alarm on Account of the new intended Settlements of the French at Cayenne, the Assembly proceeded as in the following Paragraph:

But whilst our Apprehensions are thus justly raised at this impending Danger to our Country from *without*, how deeply must we be affected by any Stretch of Power in our Superiors, that more than  
threatens



Yet true it is, that in their Address on that Occasion, the Assembly concluded with acknowledging the Authority of the supreme Power of the State over the Colonies, in the same Manner as the Committee of Correspondence did afterwards in their Letter to the Agent, and which must no doubt ex-

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threatens our Constitution from *within*! Permit us then, on this first Occasion of addressing ourselves to your Excellency, since that extraordinary Act of Parliament, establishing the Stamp Duties in the Colonies was put in Force amongst us, to lay before your Excellency, as the professed Friend, no less than the respected Chief of our Community, the Anxiety and Heart-burnings of the People on that painful Subject.

They feel the Burthen of this Impos't heavy on their Properties, yet are far more sensible of the oppressive Doctrine th't supports it, and bears down their dearer Liberties. To be subject to no internal Taxation of Government but what is authorized by the representative Body of each Society, in Concert with the Representative of the Crown presiding over it, is a Privilege which we imagined the Subjects of Great-Britain had been particularly intitled to in every Settlement, however distant, of the British Empire; as a Birth-right and Blessing, indeed, capable of making every Settlement, even the most distant of that Empire, grateful to a British Spirit. It was under the Shade of this Privilege, at least, that our own Ancestors first ventured forth to toil, and established themselves as a Colony in this salubrious Climate. And must their Posterity, yet guiltless and unoffending, be now left exposed by the Loss of it, to reap in Bitterness the Fruits of their Success! Long have we paid in Customs on our Commodities at Home; and in the Duties collected on them here, a large and grateful Tribute to the Crown for all the Expences necessary to maintain a Naval Force, and we require no other for our Security and Defence. And once, upon a just, yet gracious Requisition of the Crown for our peculiar Aid, we instantly poured forth our little Stock of Wealth to serve the Cause, with a Degree of Cheerfulness and Liberality, more than was answerable to our Sovereign's Call. Hard then is our Lot in these Days of Peace and national Prosperity, to be charged with an additional Load of Taxes, and these too aggravated by the Manner of imposing them, equally *unmerited* as *unnecessary*! But we forbear: We know it is your Excellency's Duty to see this Act observed, and we do not forget that it is ours to shew the due Submission. To submit, without Contention, to every legal Ordinance of our Mother Country, is indeed a Duty which the loyal Inhabitants of this Country never can renounce; but to submit to such an Ordinance as this, without Complaint, would be, if possible, to *deserve* the Evil we *deplore*.

pose



pose that Body, as well as it has done the Committee, to the Charge of Inconsistency and Prevarication in their Principles and Reasoning, in your censorial Eye.

AND yet in this Acknowledgement of the supreme Power of the Parliament over all the Subjects of the Realm, what have the Assembly or Committee done, more than is warranted by the Authority of some of the greatest Names of Antiquity, both on the Bench, and in the Senate?

THE Power and Jurisdiction of Parliaments, says Sir Edward Coke, is so transcendent and absolute, "that it cannot be confined, either for Causes or Persons, within any Bounds: And of this high Court he adds, it may be truly said, *si Antiquitatem spectes est vetustissima; si Dignitatem, est Honoratissima; si Jurisdictionem, est Capacissima.*" From History, and the Records of the English Government, we learn that Parliaments can regulate and new model the Succession of the Crown; can alter the established Religion of the Land, and can change and create afresh even the Constitution of the Kingdom, and of Parliaments themselves. And it was an Apothegm of the great Lord Treasurer Burleigh (says the ingenious Author to whose Researches I am obliged for these Observations on the Power of Parliaments) that "England could never be ruined but by Parliaments:" And this Opinion is confirmed by an Observation which the same Author gives us from Sir Matthew Hale, that "the Parliament being the highest and greatest Court, over which none other can have any Jurisdiction in the Kingdom, if by any Means a Misgovernment should fall upon it, the Subjects of this Kingdom are left without all Manner of Remedy." Such are the Opinions of those

those two great Lawyers, Coke and Hale, and such the Sentiments of that equally great Statesman, Burleigh, on this disputed Point betwixt yourself and our Committee of Correspondence. But if these Authorities are of too old a Date to please you, because they are of an older Date than the Colonies themselves, I will here give you one of a much later standing, and such a one as I think may be received for unexceptionable; not for his Character either as a Statesman or Lawyer, but as the Friend of Liberty and Mankind: Mr. Addison is the Author, and these his Words, "Every one knows, who has considered the *Nature of Government*, that there must be, in each particular Form of it, an *absolute unlimited Power*." Yet, that my Argument in Vindication of the Committee, for professing to yield Obedience to the Authority of Parliament, even whilst they felt and owned themselves oppressed by it, may have its *full Weight* with you, I have yet one more Name behind, that gives exactly the same Sanction to this general Doctrine, but expressed in much fuller Terms; and is a Name which I am sure you do at this Time esteem beyond all ancient and modern Names whatever, a *North American*; and the Book too, from whence I shall extract the Passage for my Purpose, written, as you will also think, on one of the most interesting of all Subjects, *the Rights of the British Colonies*: These being as the Title Page has it, *asserted and proved* by James Otis, Esq;---a Name, which, if I am not misinformed by some of my Acquaintance here who know his Character, must do Honour to any Book, and I will risque my Judgment as a Critic in declaring, I think the Book is such as might do Honour in its Turn to any Name. It was printed (as I must



I must observe, for the Information of such of my own Countrymen as have not seen the Piece itself) at Boston, in New-England, and was afterwards reprinted in London, and seems to have been written before the Stamp Act had passed, but whilst it was expected. It was written, indeed, in those calm Moments, on the Continent, whilst the Laws were heard, or rather before they became silenced by a louder Din, yet written withal under the most lively Sense of that Oppression, which the worthy Writer did at that Time see was hanging over the Colonies, and ready to burst upon them; and which, in the honest Consciousness of his Breast, drew from him this affecting Caveat. "Should any Thing have escaped me, or hereafter fall from my Pen, that has the least Aspect but that of Obedience, Duty and Loyalty to the King and Parliament, and the highest Respect for the Ministry, the Candid will impute it to the *Agony of my Heart*, rather than to the *Pravity of my Will*:" For he had been particularly warm, amongst other Subjects, in asserting the exclusive Right of the Colonies to tax themselves, demanding, "if there could be any Liberty where Property was taken away without Consent? Or if it could, with any Colour of Truth, Justice, or Equity, be affirmed, that the Northern Colonies were represented in Parliament?"---Yet, notwithstanding all this, hear how perfectly the Author agreed in Sentiment with our Committee, on the Point of *yielding a cheerful and ready Obedience to the Laws "of our Mother Country, particularly to the Power of that august Body the Parliament of Great Britain, the supreme Legislature of the Kingdom and its Dominions;*" these being the very Words he uses in declaring his Opinion on this interesting Que-



tion in one Part of his Book: But that, to which I shall now refer myself for the more particular Justification of the Committee, lies in a succeeding Page, and is to the following Effect: "It is a Maxim that the King can do no Wrong; and every good Subject is bound to believe his King is not inclined to do any. We are blessed with a Prince who has given abundant Demonstrations, that in all his Actions, he studies the Good of his People, and the true Glory of his Crown, which are inseparable. It would therefore be the highest Degree of Impudence and Disloyalty, to imagine that the King, at the Head of his Parliament, could have any but the most pure and perfect Intentions of Justice, Goodness and Truth, that human Nature is capable of. All this I say and believe of the King and Parliament, in all their Acts; even in that which so nearly affects the Interest of the Colonists; and that a most perfect and ready Obedience is to be yielded to it, while it remains in Force."

THE Author then going on to pay a Compliment to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his good Intentions, which, however, he soon spoils, by a shrewd Hint of his great *Want of Judgment*, he comes at last to the *Parliament*, which, as Infallibility belongs not to Mortals, he supposes may have been misinformed and deceived; and then closes with this extraordinary Paragraph:

"THE Power of Parliament is *uncontroulable*, but by *themselves*, and we *must obey*. They only can repeal their own Acts. There would be an *End of all Government*, if one, or a Number of Subjects or subordinate Provinces should take upon them so far to judge of the Justice of an Act of Parliament

“ment as to *refuse Obedience to it*. If there was no-  
 “thing else to restrain such a Step, Prudence ought  
 “to do it; for *forcibly resisting the Parliament* and  
 “the *King's Laws*, is HIGH TREASON. Therefore  
 “let the Parliament lay *what Burthens they please*  
 “on us, we *must*, it is our Duty to *submit* and *patient-*  
 “ly bear them, till *they will be pleased to relieve us*.  
 “And it is to be *presumed*, the *Wisdom* and *Justice*  
 “of that august Assembly, always will *afford us Re-*  
 “*liefs*, by repealing such Acts as through Mistake,  
 “or other human Infirmities, have been suffered to  
 “pass, if they *can be convinced* that their Proceed-  
 “ings are not constitutional, or not for the com-  
 “mon Good.”

WHERE now, I may demand, is that Servility in  
 our People, which yielded Obedience to the Au-  
 thority of Parliament, though they thought them-  
 selves oppressed and injured by its Act?---Where  
 the Meanness of that Policy in the Committee, who,  
 the better to engage the Parliament to ease us of  
 the Oppression, drew a Merit from the Obedience  
 of our People to their supreme and undisputed Pow-  
 er?---Where the Want of Spirit in the Committee,  
 in observing, that as their Appeal was to be made  
 to the very Power by which they were oppressed,  
 their Language should be suited to that Circum-  
 stance, and in a Stile to soften rather than provoke?  
 Where the Inconsistency of drawing the strongest  
 Picture of their Distresses, under an inconsiderate  
 and ill-advised Act of the great Legislature, and  
 yet throwing themselves on the Wisdom and Justice  
 of that Assembly (which you yourself allow to be the  
*wisest and justest Assembly upon Earth*) for their Relief?

AND yet, by an unnatural and cruel Force up-  
 on



on the Words of the Committee's Letter, you have contrived to draw a Sense from them of the basest Import, and which nothing but the most vindictive Spirit surely could instil. For how else, from any Thing which that Letter offers to the fair Eye of Candour, could it be discovered, that the Committee "had reduced themselves to the Dilemma of making a Choice between two of the *meanest* Characters,---of those who *would be Slaves from Inclination*, though they pretend to love Liberty,---and of those who are *dutiful from Fear*, though they pretend to love Submission."---Whereas the only Dilemma into which the Committee do really appear to be unfortunately brought, is betwixt two of the most *virtuous* Characters,---of those who are unwilling to part with any of their civil Rights, though they will not easily be prevailed upon to throw off their Allegiance,---and of those who can shew themselves to be dutiful on Principle, though they will not yield, without a proper Remonstrance, to Oppression. On such a Plan, on such an honest Plan alone, is the Letter of the Committee faithfully constructed, and if they were mistaken in the Draught, they have erred under a Rule laid down by one of the greatest Writers of our Nation on the Subject of Politics and *Patriotism*, that "to keep the Spirit of Liberty alive, we should *protest against* what we *cannot hinder*, and *claim*, on every Occasion, what we *cannot by our own Strength recover*." Yet for this Letter, which was intended solely for this Country's Service, and without the least Design of Prejudice to yours, you have upbraided the Gentlemen who wrote it in the most opprobrious Terms. They are charged by you with  
a Prevarication



a. Prevarication and Fear, worse, if possible, *than* *Falshood and Cowardice*; they are painted as *Slaves prostrate in the Dirt*, through their extreme Baseness, *having cowardly Hatred and Malice lurking within their Bosoms*; *wishing and waiting for Revenge, the Vices of little cruel Minds*.---And yet, would one believe it possible, my Countrymen! these are the *Transports of a North American Breast*, boasted of for being *so exactly like the Breathing of a noble British Spirit*! ---Nay more, these are the liberal Effusions of a Pen, which declared in its first Outset how *infamous it was to disgrace a good Cause by illiberal Language*.

BUT I appeal to every generous Breast, if such a Stile as this would not have been more in Character with an Address from one of those inflamed and flaming Spirits on your Continent, who, having assembled for the glorious Cause of making a Stand against Oppression, soon overlooked the Object of their laudable Engagement, and then hurried on to Robbery and to Rapine of a barbarous Kind?----- But there is a Degree of Infection (I am sensible) in all ill Examples, which it becomes the Charity of those who find themselves superior to its baneful Influence, to make a generous Allowance for, in Tempers of a weaker Frame.

I go on then with all Complacency to observe, how much I think the Committee are obliged to you, in the Midst of all your Rage, to let them see you vent a Part of it so freely on your own dear Brethren, false Brethren however they certainly were by your Account of them, who would have flyly drawn the Shackles of Slavery over the Shoulders of their Countrymen, by whom they were appointed, and even paid for watching and providing a-  
gainst

gainst every Attempt upon their much-loved Liberty.---Now, as old Lear says,

“ Those wicked Creatures yet do look well favour’d,

When others are more wicked.”

so 'tis a Comfort, surely, which you give this Country, to remark, that though the *Blockheads* and the *Slaves* are *ours*, those of a worse Stamp than either, the *Traitor*, are *your own*.

BUT why so very hard on the Committee, for their inoffensive Mention of our Charter?---But, like too many of your Fellow-Mortals, who, when they have once passed the Line of moral Rectitude, care not to what Lengths they go,---so you, Sir, having once transgressed the Bounds of that Decorum which you had set yourself to your Resentment, give your Pen a Loose to every ill-natured, and even unfair Reflection, that can be brought to drop from it on the unfortunate Committee. From what other Cause could it have happened that you have fallen foul, in such a Strain, on the Committee, only for their having brought in our Charter, as one Foundation of our Country's Rights and Privileges, although they did not bring it in there as the sole Foundation, since they joined the *Constitution of England* along with it; intending that, in Case the *one* was not strong enough to rest our Claims upon, the *other* might be brought in to its Aid, or be adopted in its Stead? But you have artfully slipt over the Committee's Mention of the *Constitution of England*, that, by confining yourself to the *Charter*, you might the more easily pick at that Foundation with Success. Yet how ungenerous, as well as unjust you are, in all that you have said in Derogation of the

Argument



Argument on that Head, appears but too clearly from this Circumstance alone, that it is an Argument which was once made Use of by yourselves.

INDEED, if the Advocates for the North American Governments had never made Mention of *their* Charters in Support of their Privileges, I suppose the Committee might have let alone the naming *this Island's* Charter in the Support of *ours*; or, had they known the ill Success of any Arguments founded on that Plan from North America, they might have profited by the Experience in their own Country's Cause. But of that they were intirely ignorant; and, if the Committee have been injudicious in the Mention of our Charter, they were led into the Error by their Fellow Subjects on the Continent; and I see no Cause for any North American to be displeased with them upon that little Score, unless it was that they would not swell the Account by following the same Leaders to a greater Length. But I shall not rest the Matter here, for I think the Committee not only excused, but justified, in the introducing of their Country's Charter, its *peculiar* Charter, as they called it. For what if our Charter should prove to be something more than a *bare* Gift of the Crown to our Ancestors of that Day! What if it should be in the Nature of the great Charter of British Liberties, so much talked of at Home, a Compact Bargain with the Crown for the Grant of all our Privileges and Immunities, in the same Manner as they were enjoyed by the liege People of England, and also for enabling the Crown to bear all the public Charges incumbent on the Government; in Return for which our Country had, in the same Moment, granted on their Side, an Impost to the Crown of the Value of more than 20,000 l. a Year, as a stand-

ing



ing Revenue to be paid in the Island out of the Articles of its Produce! Suppose further, that the Act establishing this Revenue, and granting these Rights, had been occasionally adverted to by divers Statutes and Acts of Parliament passed since that Period, now above 100 Years ago, by which the greatest of all Sanctions, that of the legislative Power, seems to have been given for its Confirmation. Supposing (I say) this to be the Case of our Charter, and that it is so, is clearly proved and made agreeably to appear, in a little Piece published in this Island a few Months ago, had not the Committee good Grounds to offer such a Charter, in Support of their Remonstrance against all Inland Taxes to be laid upon our Country by any other Body than our own Representatives? when the Charter, if not sufficient to exclude the *Right* of the British Parliament to lay such a Tax upon us, was at least good enough to shew the *Injustice* of their imposing it.---Nothing less, indeed, than the *Constitution of England*, founded on Acts of Parliament, expressly declarative of the Rights of the Subject in general, could, as the Committee well knew, absolutely confer the *exclusive Right* we claimed of taxing ourselves; yet, if the Charter granted to this Island by the Crown, could add any Weight to that Claim on the Side of *Equity and Justice*, why should the Committee be restrained from making Use of it in their Letter of Instruction to the Agent; or be subject to your harsh Centures for presuming to exercise their Judgment in that Particular, especially when your Country could be no Ways injured by any Error that should be found in it, nor your own Honour in the least hurt, by suffering the Mistake to pass you with Indulgence?

But

BUT your grand Quarrel with the Committee, I perceive, is plainly this, that they thought proper to have Recourse to any other Claim of Right than what was to be found by them in their Researches into the *Laws of Nature*; without once reflecting what a wretched Figure Arguments, depending upon the *Rights of Nature* only, would have made in such a well-cleared and little Spot as this, where we have no Woods, no Back-Settlements to retreat to, in Case those Arguments should not be able to stand their Ground, against such a Force of Rhetoric as might be brought to combat them in the open Field.

BUT to return from this Digression, and to observe with Seriousness the unworthy Inference which you have drawn from the Committee's Mention of our Charter, I insist upon it that the *passive Obedience* professed by the Committee in their Letter, shows nothing of the *Jacobitical Taint* in it, to justify your Reproaches upon that Occasion. If the Stamp Duties, indeed, had been laid on us by the Power of the Crown only; if his Majesty, dear as he is to Heaven, and to one and all the North Americans, yet, in an unhappy Moment, influenced by some *evil Spirit*, which, as you observe, may possibly step in, at Times, to *interrupt our Felicity*; had his Majesty, I say, attempted to *levy Money for, or to the Use of the Crown, by Pretence of Prerogative, without Grant of Parliament* (to answer here your Question, *if there is no Idea of Danger or Distress which Fancy could represent to the Committee, that would, in their Opinion, justify them in something else than petitioning*; and for the Sake of answering which alone it is that I am betrayed into such an odious Hypothesis) this is a Case, indeed, which the Committee must think

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would



would justify them in something else than petitioning; even in an *Opposition* to the levying of the Tribute; because this is a Case in which their Resistance would have been justified by Law and Precedent, the Point in this Case being neither new nor problematical, but Resistance actually a Duty, which they owed not only to themselves but to their Fellow Subjects at Home, as in giving up their own inherent Rights and Privileges in such an Instance, they might be the Means of giving up, or at least betraying theirs. Nor could the Consequences of our Resistance to such a Stretch of the Prerogative be otherwise than happy; for though we might suffer for a Time under the Lash of military Discipline, we should be certainly relieved and rewarded for our Suffering at last, by the superior Power of the State. But what Consolation could we have had under a Resistance to the supreme Power of the State itself, when every Authority declared against it on the Side of Law and Government, and every Consideration equally forbade it on the Side of Prudence and good Policy? Nor am I without a War-rant for this Distinction, in the two Cases, even from your Brother American, under whose Wing I have already taken such good Shelter in defending the Committee's Cause, since he makes it the Ground of an Exclamation against Taxes upon the Colonists if without their Consent, whether by the Crown alone, or by Parliament? "As it is agreed on all Hands, (he says) the Crown alone cannot impose them, we should be *justifiable* in *refusing* to pay them; but *must* and *ought* to *yield Obedience* to an *Act of Parliament*, though *ERRONEOUS*, till repealed." A Principle which he goes on in the very next Page to establish in the strong Terms before recited, and which,



which; if just and wise in so extended a Sphere as his, was doubly just and wise in such a narrow Orb as ours.

BUT whilst I am contending for the Propriety of the Committee's Sentiments in Respect to an avowed Submission to the Authority of Parliament, I should but ill support their Cause in affecting to stand up for the Infallibility of the Parliament's Decrees: In Fact, the Committee's Remonstrance, as poor a one as you think it, against the Act in Question, is a Proof they thought the Parliament had failed in its Judgment in that very Instance, and meant to lead it to a Revival and a Repeal of the improper Measure. The Committee, indeed, thought the Parliament had been guilty of an Error, and a great one too, in laying the Stamp Duties upon us, but they could not think of any other Means of redressing themselves than by petitioning the Parliament (according to ancient Privilege and Custom) to correct that Error; and it is evident that this was once the Opinion of our Brethren upon the Continent, as well as our own, or Mr. Otis would have hardly ventured to expose himself to the Imputation of a slavish Doctrine, whilst he was asserting the Rights of his Fellow Subjects about him; and confess, in so clear a Manner as he has done, that "they (meaning the Parliament, whose Power he had, in the very Line preceeding this, declared to be *uncontroulable* but by *themselves*). can only repeal their own Acts." The Committee, indeed, are far from thinking any Thing *human* to be *infallible*, for they do not think even the North American Writers to be so, as dogmatically as one of them has been pleased to address himself in particular to *them*, for Infallibility can never dwell where there is

a Changeableness or Diversity of Opinion; and I defy any Man to produce two Passages out of Locke and Filmer, wider from each other, in Opinion of the *Origin of Government*, than I can two Passages out of Mr. Otis's Pamphlet and your Address to the Committee, concerning *the Measures of Obedience to be kept by us with the Parliament*: Mr. Otis has declared "there would be an End of all Government if one or a Number of Subjects, or subordinate Provinces, should take upon them so far to judge of the Justice of an Act of Parliament as to refuse Obedience to it;" whilst you, Sir, afford whole Pages to shew, that there would be an End of all Virtue, all Truth, all Freedom, all Courage in the Colonists, if they did not *refuse to act* obediently to a Law, which, in their own Opinion, was *destructive to them*. Pray then, Gentlemen, as you cannot both be right in this Matter, correct your own Errors, before you take upon you to correct the Errors of your Neighbours. Be, at least, agreed about your Tenets, before either of you persecute for false Opinions: Or, instead of being able to make your Learners sensible of their Ignorance, you will make them sensible of nothing but your own Barbarity.

THAT the Committee were right in their Principle of having Recourse to Petition, and to Petition only, for Redress, at that Time, and under the immediate Circumstances of Things, is a Truth they can never be persuaded out of: But if their Petition had failed of the desired Effect, and the Burthen had been continued on our Shoulders, that some other Means should then have been resolved upon for our Relief, they and every Man in the Country will be ready to allow you; yet those Means



Means would have had nothing of *Violence* in them, since *that* would not have answered *our* Purpose: "Oppression, said the *arbitrary* King of Judea (very opportunely for some Folks who lived a good many Centuries after him, under a *limited* Monarchy) maketh a wise Man mad;" but Oppression, saith an humble Native of Barbados, should not have robbed his Countrymen of their Senses, because if it had, *that* must have exposed them to be robbed of every Thing else: For they who appeal to the Sword must abide by its Decision; and they who are too weak to succeed by any Thing but pacific Arguments, will be too wise to raise up a Legion to dispute with them, on the Point in Question. No, Sir, we must have supplied by *Policy* what we wanted in *Strength*, and though an *active* Courage would have availed us nothing, a *settled* Fortitude would have done the Business. One of the first Steps which our Representatives would have taken (for such a Design, I know, was formed by some of them, and they had no Reason to fear a single dissenting Voice to such a Motion) was to have resolved, that since the *Government at Home* had been pleased to lay *internal* Taxes upon the People of this Island, *they* would, themselves, lay *none* upon them; for this is a Piece of Justice they would have owed to their Constituents in such a Case; since whatever might have been determined about the *Right* of Parliament to lay these Taxes upon us, the *Hardship* of their *exerting* it was out of all Dispute. Our Representatives therefore would have been strictly justified in resolving to raise no Salary for the Future for any Governor or Commander in Chief that should appear amongst us from the *other Side of the Water*, nor to burthen their Fellow Subjects with  
any



any other Expences whatsoever attending the Government of the Island, not even for the Repair of our Fortifications; but to leave the whole Weight of this, with every other Charge, upon our Rulers at Home. Such a Resolution, perhaps, might have provoked *farther Oppressions*, and if it did, these should, in their Turn, have made us *more resolved*. Not that I imagine our Rulers would have wanted such a Resolution on our Part, to tempt them to further Oppressions on theirs. The Ease and Convenience they would have found in multiplying these internal Taxes upon us, to the Relief of their own Burthens, would have been a sufficient Inducement of itself; and our Tameness in submitting to them would rather have encouraged the Proceeding: For who ever knew an Ass to have a less Load put upon his Back, for standing quietly to take all that his unmerciful Keeper was disposed to lay upon him? Under these accumulated Burthens, the State of our Country must have worn a new Aspect: *Hitherto* our Dependance on Great Britain had been considered by us, as the Dependance of *Children* upon a *loving Parent*; but *then* it must have become the Dependance of *Slaves* upon an *hard Task-master*: Yet, to *shake off* this Dependance by the Strength of our Arm, must have been impossible, but it was in our Power to *lessen* it by a new and not unnatural System.

“A Nation in *Slavery* (saith that great Philosopher and Politician Montesquieu) labours more to *preserve* than to *acquire*; a *free* Nation, *more to acquire* than to *preserve*.” Now from these Principles I deduce the System which must have naturally taken Place amongst us: Whilst our Situation was happy, whilst we held our Properties on  
Terms

Terms of Ease and Freedom, we put forth all our Labour, we stretched our Credit to the utmost to improve them, and raise the greatest Quantity of that rich and valuable Produce, which, in the same Moment that it increased our private Wealth, increased also (by the heavy Duty which was laid on it) the Revenue of the Crown: Our Labour and our Credit, I say, were devoted to the Production of that rich Commodity, whilst we threw ourselves intirely on the Care and Concern of our Mother Country, and her Dominions, for our Cloathing and Subsistence; and in the furnishing these Supplies she reaped a farther Advantage, from that Circumstance, in her Trade and Manufactures.

BUT no sooner should this Dependance, from being esteemed a Blessing, be looked upon as a Curse, than the Effects must have been answerable to those new Impressions; and from labouring, as in a State of Freedom, to *acquire*, we should have come to labour, as in a State of Slavery, merely to *preserve*. The Privileges, which till that Time had been annexed to our Properties, being torn away from them by the hard Hand of Power, the Improvement of those Properties since it must have been for the Advantage only of those who held the Reins over our Heads, must have ceased to engage us. Deprived of the Means of *enjoying* our Possessions, we should have become intent only upon those of *living* by them, and to that End we should have resolved for the Future to raise only Half the Quantity of that valuable Article we had been accustomed to do, from our several Plantations, and, in order to live within ourselves, as independantly of our Mother Country as was possible, we should have planted up the vacant Land in Provisions, or left  
it



it in Pasture for our Cattle, for the Maintenance of our Families. In short, we should have raised from our Plantations no more Sugar than would have been sufficient to pay our Debts, and buy us a little Cloathing; and a very little in this hot Country would have sufficed, as well as, under the Habits of Life which our new System must have introduced, the cheapest and plainest only would have been purchased.

SUCH were the Resources (destitute as our Superiors have thought us to be in such a Situation) which the Inhabitants of this Island would have found in the supposed oppressive Times; and as these were natural and just, it is to be presumed that the Inhabitants of the other Islands might have betaken themselves to the same Means for their Convenience and Ease; the Consequences of all which to our Mother Country, must have been injurious to a great Degree, in the Decrease of her Revenue, and in the Decay of her Trade, so that she would at last have found she had really gained less by her Oppressions, than she had received from her Indulgence. Whilst the French Islands, encouraged by *their* Nation, would have been advancing in their Prosperity, in Proportion as the English Settlements were sinking under an adverse Fortune, and must at length have carried away the Sugar Trade from us, in every Market in Europe. And where the Mischief would have ended, whilst a general and deep-rooted Discontent amongst the Islands exposed them to every Temptation that lay in the Way to their Relief, God only knows!---But I am glad to save myself the Pain of a disagreeable Prognostic here, with Thanks to that enlightning Grace and Favour from above, which could alone dispose  
and



and, turn the Hearts of our Rulers to a *Prevention* of these Evils, rather than to abide the *Hazard* of their *Cure*.

BUT here your Question may return upon me, and with greater Force perhaps, for all that I have been just now saying, Why the Committee would leave a Matter of this *important Concern* to be petitioned for by the *Agent* of the Island, rather than by themselves and their Brother Members of the two Houses? In Answer to which, I will at once own the Justness of your Objection, though I was not so sensible of it at the Time that your Address was first put into my Hand as now, the Committee themselves having been but lately brought to a just Sense of their Error in that Particular, though the Occasion which has opened their Eyes to this Truth, has discovered to them another, which they could hardly have supposed, viz. that some of the *Provinces* on the *Northern Continent*, in the last Session of Parliament, had *fallen* into the *very same Mistake*; and that the Petitions modelled in that Form had been denied a Hearing in Parliament, because they were the Petitions of the *Agents*, and not of the *Colonies* they belonged to, the *Former* pleading in vain their Instructions on the Subject Matters of their Petitions from the *Latter*.

THIS Piece of Intelligence, it seems, the Committee have received by one of the last Ships from England, from their Agent, in Answer to their Letter of Instructions about the Stamp Act, which, however, had not reached his Hands till after the Repeal;---so that if the Committee were wrong (as it is now too clear they were) in referring any of *their important Concerns to their Agent*, the *Error* was not quite so *strange* a one as you would make it;

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and to see you, who are a *North American*, so very severe upon it, is, I think, the *strangest Thing* of the two. But, 'tis an Observation I have somewhere met with, on the Deceitfulness of the human Heart, which, in the concluding Part of it, is not inapplicable to the present Case, that though Men will be indulgent in their Speech of any particular Failing in others, which they are conscious of in themselves, so long as the Gratification of it continues pleasing to them; yet, no sooner is it found injurious, or beginning to disgust, than they are for severely lashing that Fault, above all others, in their Neighbours, by Way of a convenient, and (to be sure) a very satisfactory *Atonement* for it in themselves. But if you, Sir, can derive no Advantage from this Observation, I shall have lost my Pains in making it, for I shall myself draw none from the Occasion, by Way of screening the Committee from any further Examination of their Conduct in the Particular before us; since, from the strictest Examination of their *Motives* in this Matter, the Committee (at least that Part of them which is more immediately accountable for their Conduct to the Public) must receive the fullest Testimony of their *laudable Intention*. But to be regular in my Defence of the Gentlemen on this Head; I must observe that they are no farther responsible for the Choice of addressing the Crown and Parliament by the Mouth of the Agent, than as they contributed towards it by their several Voices in the House of Assembly, when it was made a Question there. But allowing that every one of the Gentlemen had voted in the House for that Choice, they were justified in so doing on the worthiest Principles; since the Case, as I am able to collect it from the Minutes of the Assembly, and other



other Means of Information, that can be equally depended upon, was this: A Motion had been made in the House, soon after the Meeting of the new Assembly, to present an Address to the King against the Stamp Act, which was unanimously assented to; but some of the Members thinking that it would add Weight to such a Remonstrance to engage the Council to join the Assembly in it, a Motion was directly after made, and as unanimously approved of, to apply to the Council for their Concurrence: The Application was accordingly made, but the Answer returned to it by the Council was, that they would join the Assembly in a full *Letter to the Agent*, empowering him to present a Memorial, in the Names of their two Bodies, to the King and Parliament on the Subject. The Question then came on before the Assembly, Whether they would adopt the Method of remonstrating chosen by the Council, with the Advantage of that respectable Body united with them in the Measure; or tenaciously adhere to their own Mode, under the Disadvantage of remonstrating alone, or rather under that of a declared Dissent in all the Members of Council to their Remonstrance? taking this, too, into the Consideration, that the Difference of petitioning the King and Parliament by the Agent, or by a direct Address from the Council and Assembly, was not then known; and our Agent's Judgment and Ability for such a Task, moreover, incontestible. It was no Wonder then that this last Circumstance, joined to those Advantages on the Agent's Side in Point of Situation, determined a Majority, and a very large one it was too, in Favour of a Memorial from the Agent, under the Sanction of *both* Houses, preferably to an Address from the



*lower House alone*, clogged with something too like a Protest against it from the *Upper*.----Such is the true State of the Case that gave Rise to this Letter from the Committee of Correspondence; and if the Gentlemen were *unfortunate* in their Choice of the *Means* of addressing ~~of~~ the Throne and Parliament on this Occasion, they were at least *not culpable* in the *Motive*: Nay, when we consider the Assembly as sacrificing every partial Attachment to their own Opinion, to a generous Inclination for the public Service, the Voice which the Committee gave with them for such a Sacrifice, was rather a Circumstance to their Honour.

A Letter to the Agent, then, being the Result of these Deliberations, the only Business of the Committee was to prepare one correspondent to the Ideas that prevailed to have it written; and I flatter myself, from the impartial Review which has been here taken of it, so far as I have gone, the Cause of our Country has been very faithfully served by its Contents, without the least Injury designed or done by it to the Cause of civil Liberty.

BUT there is one Point remaining, which I have reserved for the last, though not the least material, to be discussed; but on which I hope to make the Charge which you have brought against the Committee on that Score, appear as futile as the rest: The Point I mean, is the *Reserve*, couched under an Expression in the Committee's Letter, on the Subject of our exclusive Right to lay internal Taxes on ourselves; which, in your accustomed Candour of Interpretation, you have wrung into a SURRENDER *of that most valuable Right*. But I believe no Man besides yourself, or even after yourself, that has a Grain of Judgement or Understanding

ing of his own to lead him, and with just so much Candour as to restore the Words (*we cannot positively say*) on which you found this heavy Charge, to their own proper Place in the Committee's Letter, and then connect them with what goes before, and what immediately follows after; no Man, I say, who takes a Review of the Words in this fair Manner, can find the least Pretence for passing on them so severe a Sentence: On the Contrary, I think these very Words lead us to the strongest Proof of an *Unwillingness* in the Committee to *yield* the Right in Question. But I proceed---After the most cogent Argument, founded on the Principles of natural Justice, which the Committee bring in order to support this Claim, saying, "If we are to be subject to the Power of the Parliament of Great-Britain in our internal Taxes; we must be always liable to Impositions, that have nothing but the Will of the Imposers to direct them in the Measure, since we have there no Representatives to inform them of the true State of our Circumstances, and of the Degree of our Strength to bear the Burthens that are imposed." They then think fit to add "How far, indeed, we are intitled, by the Constitution of England, or our own peculiar Charter, to an Exemption from every other internal Tax, than such as may be laid upon us by the Representatives of our own People, in Conjunction with the two other Branches of our legislative Body, we cannot positively say."---And now, what comes after? Do they *therefore* say *no more* about it? Quite otherwise, as you now will see: For if neither by the Constitution of England, which prescribes the civil Rights of all its Subjects in general, nor by our own peculiar Charter, which declared the

Rights



Rights of our Community in particular, the Committee could not positively say, their Title to this Privilege was made appear they then go on to say, they have, however, another Plea to offer in their Favour, that of *long Prescription*. "But this is certain, that we have enjoyed that Privilege, that seeming Birth-Right of every Briton, ever since the first Establishment of a civil Government in this Island to the present Time." And after all, lest this too, with the foregoing Pleas, should fail them, earnest to establish the Right by any and every Means they could, they at last offer the Plea of *Merit* in their Behalf. "And why we should at this Period be condemned to the Loss of so inestimable a Blessing of Society, we can see no Cause; since the present Period has afforded some Instances of Loyalty and Affection to our King and Mother Country, which might rather have intitled us to new Favours from the Crown and Nation, than have left us exposed to any *Deprivation of our old and valuable Rights*."

Thus, then, by a fair and candid Examination of that very Passage, from whence you have squeezed out a few Words to shew the Committee guilty of a gross *Breach of Trust*, I flatter myself I have shewn them to have acted not only with *Fidelity* but with *Zeal*. True it is, that the Committee, after these warm Assertions of their Country's Title to the exclusive Privilege they claimed, disheartened by all the Intelligence they had received from England of the Resolution of *all Parties* to maintain the Right of the Mother Country to tax her Colonies at Will (for though there had been a Change in the Ministry in the Interval of passing the Stamp Act and the succeeding Sessions of Parliament, and a declar-

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ed Disposition in the new Ministers to relieve the Colonies, by taking off the Burthen of the disputed Tax, yet there was no Change that appeared in the Sentiments of a Right inherent in the Mother Country to impose that Tax upon us) the Committee, I say, naturally disheartened by that Circumstance, yet anxious to get their Country relieved, by any Means, of the ungrateful Imposition; they proceed, in their Instructions to the Agent, to give him such discretionary Powers as might be answerable to the End they had in View: And for that Purpose they prudently forbore to *tye him down* in his Memorial to the urging of that Point, on which, however, their own Hearts were set; yet he might perceive the Minds of People in Power, and the Parliament, both too strongly bent against it for him to press the Claim without the Hazard of doing Injury to the Cause; and therefore referred it to his Judgment, which they knew was excellent, to accommodate his Memorial to the Temper of the Times, and to the Circumstances of Things. Sensible as they were of their own Want of Power, to wrest the Privilege out of the Hands of the Parliament by *Violence*, if they failed of drawing it from them by *Persuasion*, to what Purpose should the Committee have swaggered away in more confident Expressions on the Subject, but to expose themselves, in Case of a Disappointment, to Contempt and Ridicule? But if it was mean and servile, after all, in the Committee, to *apply for* the Redress of our Grievance in this Particular, on any *other* Ground than that of a *positive Demand* of the exclusive Right in Question, then I insist upon it here, that it was equally, nay more, mean and servile in you and your Countrymen, to *express all the Joy* which you have done, at  
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the obtaining this Redress on Terms that have not so much as a Shadow of Regard for that Demand, for which you all so violently contended, and so violently upbraided others for not contending also.--- With as good Reason, then, I might charge the SURRENDER of *that valuable Right* upon the Part which the North Americans have taken since a Repeal of the Stamp Act was *granted*, as you have done upon the Part taken by our Committee of Correspondence to *obtain it*. But the Truth is, that neither of them can be justly charged with such an odious Failing.

To prevail with our Rulers to *establish us in Privileges essential* (in our Esteem) *to Liberty*, was certainly the most desirable Thing; but if that could not be got, then our next Point was, to prevail with them to *moderate the Powers of Government in our Favour*: And this is the Thing which has been done, and this too I presume is that very *Moderation* in the State, which you, Sir, have so particularly and highly extolled as a *Virtue, and the Parent of Virtues*. What a Pity is it then that with so exalted an Idea in your Mind of the goodly *Fruits of Moderation*, you would not allow your Address to the Committee of Correspondence, the Thing you were so intent upon begetting, to bear the Marks of one of *her fair Offspring*. But, alas, instead of this being any Thing like the *Fruit of Moderation*, it is in Reality the very *Child of Intemperance*: For could any Thing be more unreasonable, or more unjust in you, than to exclaim, as you have done, against a Sett of Gentlemen, the Representatives of such a small and helpless Colony as ours, for expressing themselves with some Reserve and Modesty on a Point in Agitation betwixt them and their Mother Country,



Country, at the very Time you must have known that the Mother Country had, with all the Powers of her Government, determined the Matter in her own Favour against them, and that too, not without a formal Declaration damnatory of every Resolve that contained a different Sense of the Matter, however confidently expressed, in any of the larger Colonies! Nay more, to exclaim against those Gentlemen for the Discretion they made Use of, in endeavouring to get the oppressive Act in Question repealed upon the best Terms they could, if they could not obtain it on the good Terms they wished; when you and all your Fellow Subjects on that boundless Continent were preparing to accept of a Repeal of it, although granted for Reasons that had not the least Aspect of Indulgence to the sacred Privilege, in a Tumult of Joy! How you can reconcile this, indeed, to any Sense of Justice or Appearance of Candour, I am at a Loss to guess. Yet all the Return I shall make you for so undeserved and wanton an Instance of your Unkindness to my Friends, is to assure you, not only of my own, but of their sincere Congratulations with you, and all your Countrymen, on an Event that restores you to the Blessings of Peace and good Order, as well as delivers you from the Burthen of an unusual and invidious Tax: The latter Part of the Benefit, indeed, is ours no less than yours, whilst the Former, it was our good Fortune, if you will not suffer me to call it our Virtue, not to stand in Need of. And yet I cannot help wishing, with all the Earnestness of a Fellow Citizen, for your Sakes, as well as for the Interest we should have had in it ourselves, that when our Mother Country had gone thus far in binding up the Wounds of her Colonies, she had

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consented to go a little farther in that salutary Work; and by passing the Repeal on a more generous Principle, had freed them from the Danger of being ever opened again. Nor do I think that the Advantages, which would have been obtained by the Colonies in that Case, would have taken any Thing from the Authority of the Mother Country; for what is there that so effectually ties up the Hands, as that which seizes and secures the Heart? But I indulge the Hope that although this Exemption was not allowed the Colonies as a Matter of *Privilege*, the Enjoyment of it will be continued to them as a Matter of *Justice*: Since the Advantages which are derived to Great Britain from these Parts of her Dominions, are in the Gross so great and ample, as to make the Pickings of internal Taxes from the Inhabitants an unreasonable, as well as an ungracious Tribute. I trust therefore in the Wisdom and Justice of Parliament, that, although the Right of imposing those internal Taxes upon us be now formally established in their Hands, they will not, however, exercise it more, but prudently allow it to remain, locked up in the Archives of the State; like those old Suits of heavy Armour in the Tower, which afford indeed a very flattering Emblem of the Strength and Power of the Nation, but which are now well known to be attended with infinitely more *Incumbrance* than *Advantage* in the *Use*.

HAVING now said every Thing which I thought was necessary to exculpate the Committee, and set their Letter to the Agent, which had been exhibited through so false a Medium, in its proper Light, I look upon my Labour as at an End: For as to any other Strictures on your Performance, than such as naturally presented themselves to me in the Course

Course of this Defence, I have as little Inclination to hunt after them, as I have Wit and Ingenuity to pursue the Game. Intent upon repairing, not returning, Injuries, I have no other Desire by this Letter than to save the Honour of my Friends; no Wish for any greater Punishment to their Reviler than to leave him to his own Reflections. You, Sir, have indeed indulged a Freedom with your Pen, which in a more hasty Answer might have excused, and even justified as free a Treatment: But I am pleased at the Occasion which I have given myself to remember, that though Freedom be indeed, in all its Branches, a most tempting Privilege of Society, Benevolence is its greatest Ornament.

You will, however, think, perhaps, that I have not dealt so generously with you as I pretend, if I close this Letter without taking any Notice of the concluding Paragraph in your Address, so much as it has of the Appearance of a conciliatory and complaisant Conclusion. With all Respect, then, I will attend you to the *Door*, and keep up the Punctilio through *every Step* you take to it.---“ You mean, “ you say, no *personal* Reflections on the Gentle-  
“ men;” but how little Consolation could they derive from this, unless they had found some secret Charm in your Address, to steel their Breasts as *Men*, against those Arrows, bitter Words, which you had thrown at them as *Members of a public Body*?

It was very considerate and humane in you, however, after heaping on this little *Body* such a “ Load of Obloquy,” to remind them (as you do) of a great and magnanimous Nation, which had quietly suffered under an equal Weight of undeserved Abuse. It was really generous in you ( I say) to put them in Mind of so eminent an Example of Pa-



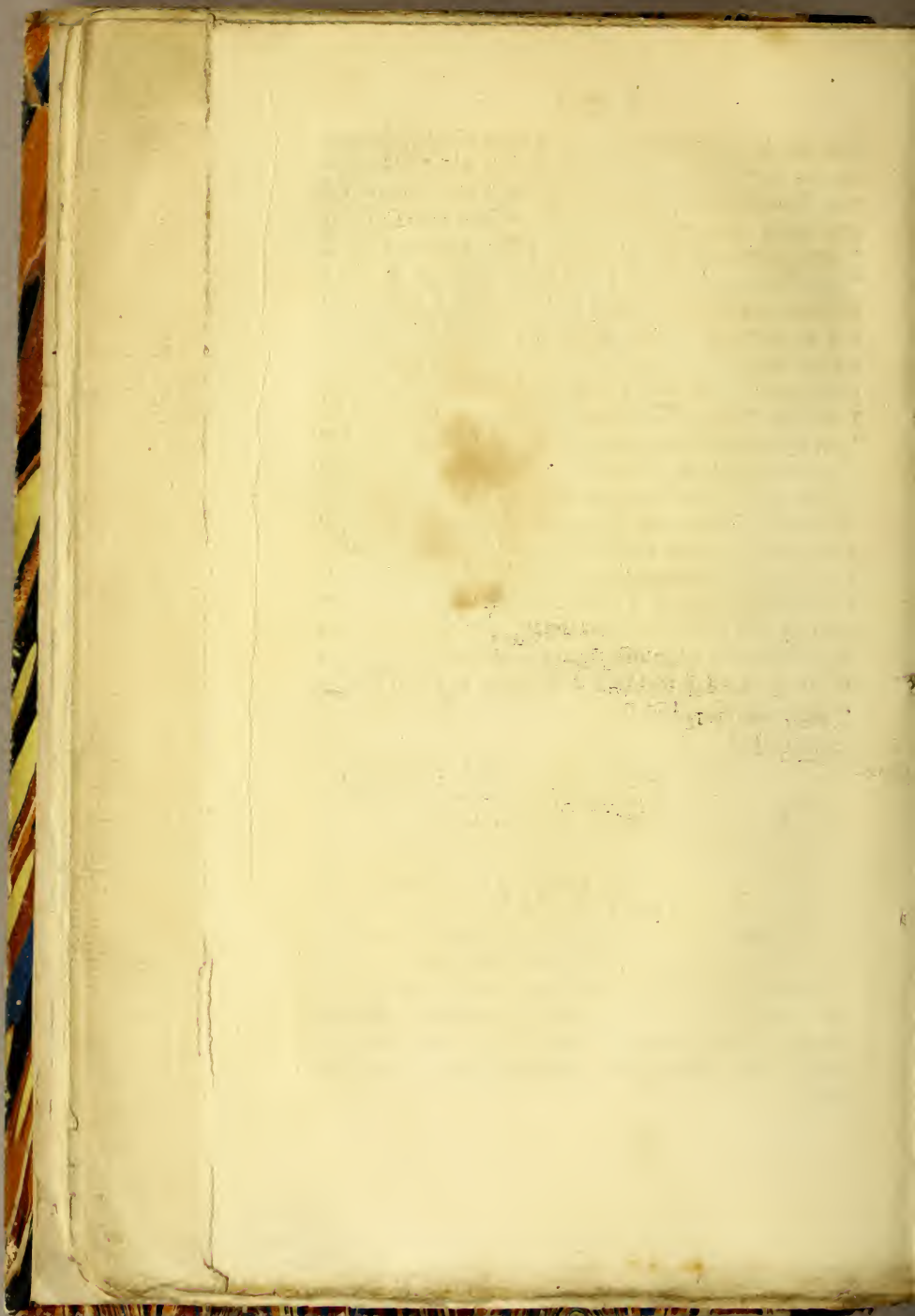
tience in other People, when you had afforded them  
 so extraordinary an Occasion for the Exercise of it  
 in themselves.---But you do them the Honour of  
 supposing that "their private Characters may be  
 "amiable." How could you have the Heart, then,  
 but on the surest Grounds of Provocation, to set a-  
 bout to render them contemptible in their public  
 Stations? But you justify this upon a Charge a-  
 gainst the Gentlemen, "of a most high and unpro-  
 "voked Censure on a gallant, generous, loyal Peo-  
 "ple:" They deny the Fact; and they insist, that,  
 upon a fair Examination of the Case, *they* are, them-  
 selves, in the very Circumstance you bring, the *in-*  
*jured Party*.---But you say farther, that "they have  
 "propagated a Sett of Sentiments, and promoted  
 "a Tenor of Conduct that may be hurtful to the  
 "Cause of Freedom;" an heavy Charge, indeed,  
 on Gentlemen, and the Descendants of Britons! But  
 what other Sentiments have they propagated,  
 than such as partook of the Nature and Essence of  
 all known and practised Government; and which  
 stood supported by the best Authorities in all States  
 and Countries; not excepting even your own,  
 where too it is observable, that the Author quoted  
 has not founded his Doctrine, as others do, upon a  
 Chain of general and abstracted Reasoning, but fix-  
 es it by Arguments that prove the Obedience due on  
 this Particular Occasion?---What other Tenor of  
 Conduct, then, can the Committee be said to have  
 promoted, than such as was plainly pointed out to  
 them by the Dictates of their Duty; and which e-  
 very Circumstance too, in their Situation (as I have  
 shewed) conspired to strengthen?---"You have en-  
 "gaged, you say, in this Quarrel, with unequal  
 "Arms." But, methinks, to give the first Blow,  
 and

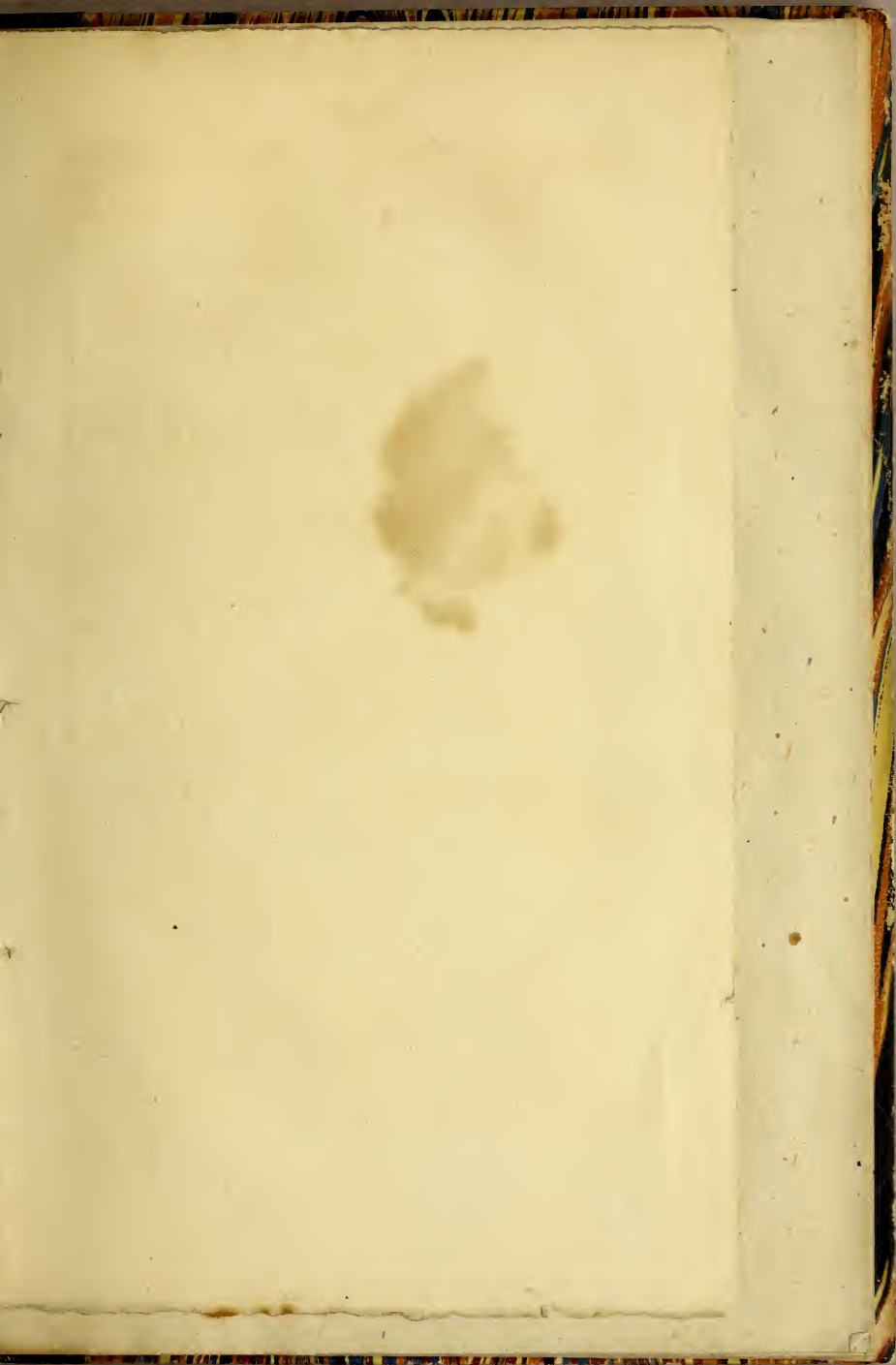
and that so unexpectedly, and in so unusual a Manner as you have done, was rather laying your *Adversaries*, than being yourself, under the Disadvantage of engaging upon *unequal Terms*.---“ But to *fail* (you say) in such a Contest, would afford *you* some Kind of *Pleasure*.” Now I am of so different a Way of thinking from yourself in this, that I protest to fail on *this Side* of the Question, would be to give *me* the greatest *Pain*.----But Thanks for your concluding Wishes to my Friends! which are for no less than “ every Blessing that Men can enjoy; and “ as a Foundation and Security of all the rest, for “ a true Love of Liberty:” In Return for which (and I would fain be grateful in it) I wish *your Country* every Advantage that can be derived from so able and strenuous an Advocate as she has in you; and as an Improvement, no less than a Security of that Blessing to her, I wish *yourself* a serious Attention to this useful Lesson, that “ the natural Place “ of Virtue is near to Liberty; but she is found as “ far from an unbridled Freedom, as from down- “ right Slavery.”

A NATIVE of BARBADOS.

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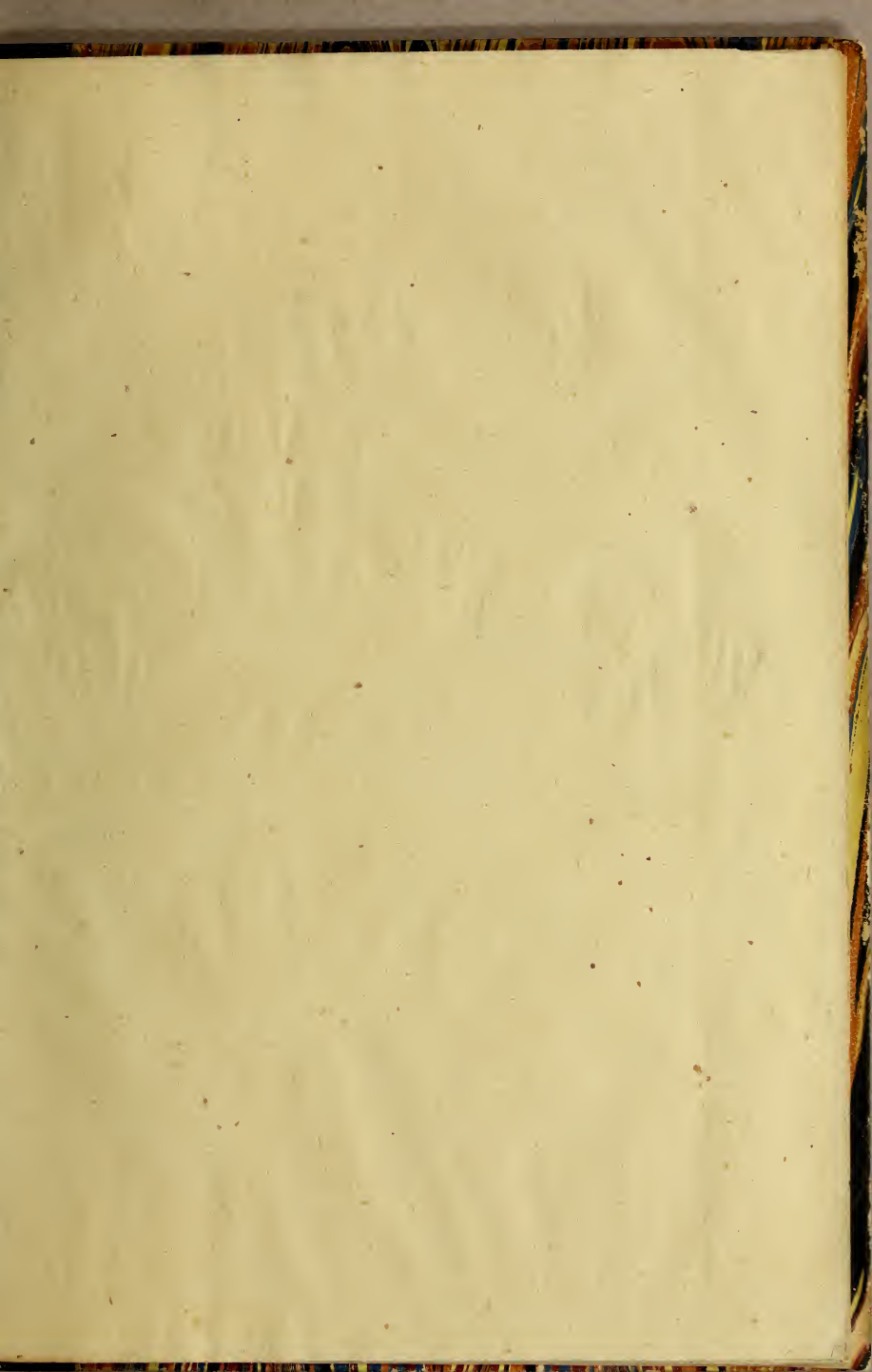


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